

CHELSEA/WATER STREETS CONNECTOR
LITTLE MYSTIC CHANNEL CROSSING

CHARLESTOWN

Memorandum of Understanding between Massachusetts Port Authority and Boston Redevelopment Authority in Connection with Proposed Construction of Chelsea Street Bridge over Little Mystic Channel and a Proposed Connector between Water and Chelsea Street to Improve Traffic Circulation within the community of Charlestown, Boston, Massachusetts

1. BACKGROUND

In 1974 the Boston Redevelopment Authority and the Massachusetts Port Authority identified the need for several improvements to the road network in Charlestown. Both agencies determined through a variety of meetings with the Charlestown community groups and individual residents and businessmen that these proposed changes were strongly desired by the people of Charlestown.

The Massachusetts Port Authority and the Boston Redevelopment Authority agreed to undertake a coordinated effort to plan for and obtain State or Federal approval of funding for these improvements in the shortest time possible.

In January 1975 the Massachusetts Port Authority and the Boston Redevelopment Authority entered into a Memorandum of Understanding for the purpose of jointly funding a consultant to produce the Draft Environmental Impact Statement necessary to expedite the construction of the Little Mystic Crossing and Chelsea/Water Street Connector. Wallace, Floyd, Ellenzweig, Moore, Inc. was hired and prepared the required Negative Declaration which has been presented in public meeting and is presently under final review at the Federal Highway Administration.

2. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to continue the coordinated effort between the two Authorities to undertake the next stage of the project by preparing engineering designs for construction of the bridge and connector. This memo outlines the nature of the agreement for the approval of the respective Board of the Authorities. It is based on the 1975 agreement.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

3.1 The Little Mystic Channel Bridge. This proposed bridge will be a fixed span replacing a previously existing draw bridge. The bridge will extend Chelsea Street which currently dead ends at the Little Mystic. On the north side of the Channel, it connects with Terminal Street. It will be designed to minimize interference with the Mystic Terminal.

Once constructed, the Little Mystic Bridge will enable trucks serving the Port and industries on the north side of the Little Mystic Channel to enter the expressway system by a shorter and safer route. If the bridge is not built, trucks will have to continue to pass between two densely populated housing complexes and between the Charlestown High School and its athletic facilities. The bridge will be of sufficient size to carry projected traffic.

- 3.2 Chelsea/Water Streets Connector. Before the construction of the Mystic River Toll Bridge, Chelsea Street was the main north-south artery connecting Charlestown to Chelsea. The bridge severed Chelsea Street and ended this through route. The connection of Water Street with the stub of Chelsea Street which remains on the eastern side of the Mystic Bridge (and which dead ends between the Bridge and the wall of the Navy Yard) will re-open this important route to traffic and relieve the residential areas of Charlestown to which this traffic is currently diverted.

This change has always been a desirable one, but the development of a national park at the former entrance to the Boston Naval Shipyard, and the increase in activity at the Moran Container Terminal now make it imperative.

The proposed connector would extend Water Street to join Chelsea and require relocation of the National Park wall. For improved traffic flow, the present northbound exit in Charlestown would be relocated a few hundred yards further north and also connected to Chelsea Street by a long ramp. Chelsea/Water Street would be two-way and would be of sufficient width to handle existing and proposed traffic.

- 3.3 Central Artery Reconstruction. These improvements will be coordinated with planning underway for construction of the northern portion of the Central Artery.

4. DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 Preparation of Final Engineering Designs. In the interest of expediting construction of this project, the BRA and MPA agree to fund a consultant to produce final engineering designs for the project. The two Authorities agree to jointly issue a request for proposal to engineering consultants for this project. The estimated cost of this jointly funded consultant contract will be in the vicinity of \$400,000, to be shared equally by Massport and the BRA.

Staff members from both Authorities will meet jointly with the consultant at regular intervals and coordinate ongoing work.

5. EXECUTION OF CONSULTANT CONTRACT

The consultant contract will be submitted to the Boards of both Authorities for their approval.

6. FEDERAL AND/OR STATE FUNDING OF PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

In August 1975 the Massachusetts Port Authority, Boston Redevelopment Authority and Massachusetts Department of Public Works entered into a Memorandum of Understanding regarding state and federal funding of the construction of this project. This Memorandum of Understanding will be extended to cover the design phase proposed by this agreement.

7. AGREEMENT OF NECESSITY AND URGENCY OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PROJECT

The Boston Redevelopment Authority and Massachusetts Port Authority by approving the signing of this document by their respective directors agree:

- (1) to the importance of the immediate construction of the Little Mystic Bridge and the Chelsea/Water Streets Connector, and
- (2) to providing the necessary staff time and other resources to achieve this goal, and
- (3) to undertake the preparation of final engineering designs for these improvements.

BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

MASSACHUSETTS PORT AUTHORITY

Robert F. Walsh, Director

David W. Davis
Executive Director

Date

Date

MEMORANDUM

December 15, 1977

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

FROM: ROBERT F. WALSH, DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: CHELSEA/WATER STREETS CONNECTOR - LITTLE MYSTIC BRIDGE CROSSING
IN CHARLESTOWN

We request authorization to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Massachusetts Port Authority concerning the final design of the subject project. The proposed memorandum is attached and has recently been approved by the Massport Board. It calls for the joint fostering of project engineering through a consultant contract. Such a consultant contract will require future Board action and is subject to the availability of funds. Project construction requires state and federal money.

This proposed joint effort represents a continuation of the BRA/Massport cooperation in the preparation of necessary environmental documents which was initiated in January 1975 by a previous Memorandum of Understanding. The necessary environmental work is now being concluded.

The project is essential in getting trucks off of Lowney Way, Medford Street and other Charlestown streets, in providing access to the Navy Yard development and the port and other industrial uses north of Medford Street.

The next steps in furthering the project are:

1. Issuance of a Request for Proposals to about 6 consultants.
2. Selection of a consultant
3. Establishment of a detailed Scope of Work
4. Contract Execution and Notice to Proceed

It is hoped that construction might begin in 1979.

VOTE:

To authorize the Director to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Massport relating to continued planning for the Little Mystic Crossing and Chelsea/Water Streets Connector. The Memorandum of Understanding provides for the submission of the resulting consultant contract to the Boards of both Authorities for approval.